

III. Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1, 3-8, 10-26, and 28-39 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 15, and 22 have been amended, and Claims 2, 9, and 27 have been cancelled.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to Claim 15 because of an informality. Accordingly, the Applicants have amended Claim 15 to correct the informality and respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this objection.

Rejections Under 35 USC §103 – Part One

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 21-25, 27, 28, 30, 31, and 39 under 35 USC §103(a) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 4,274,358 to Nakamura (Nakamura) in view of United States Patent No. 5,703,612 to Salmon et al. (Salmon).

With regard to Claims 9 and 27 the Examiner asserts that the Nakamura discloses a light guide (surface 26a) mounted to said bottom surface of said hub portion adapted to propagate light from said light sources upward into said pointer (Figure 4). The Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner and assert that a light guide is not shown in Nakamura.

Reference numeral 26a in Nakamura refers simply to the bottom surface of the pointer. More specifically, the present application states that the light guide is mounted to the bottom surface of the hub. The instrument pointer, including surface 26a, is mounted to a top surface of the hub 20a of Nakamura.

The present invention claims a light guide 40, a separate component, mounted onto the bottom surface of the hub 18. The light collecting portion 28 and the needle portion 26 of the instrument pointer of the present application are mounted onto the top surface of the hub 18, distal from the light guide 40, which is mounted to the bottom surface of the hub 18. The light guide 40 has a thickness such that the light is transferred upward through the light guide 40 to the light collection portion 28. The light collection portion 28 of the present application has a bottom surface (not numbered) similar to surface 26a of Nakamura. The hub 18 is between the light collecting portion 28 of the instrument needle and the light guide 40. This is not the case in Nakamura. The surface 26a that has been identified as a light guide is simply a bottom surface of the pointer.

Claims 1 and 22 have been amended to include the limitations of dependant claims 9 and 22 respectively. The Applicants respectfully assert that Claims 1 and 22 as amended are patentable over Nakamura in view of Salmon. The Applicants further assert that claims 3-7, 10, 12, 13, 21, 23-25, 27, 28, 30, 31, and 39 are allowable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from allowable independent claims 1 or 22. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under 35 USC §103(a).

Rejections Under 35 USC §103 – Part Two

The Examiner rejected Claims 14-20, and 32-38 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura in view of Salmon and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,521,725 to Beeson et al. (Beeson).

The Examiner also rejected Claims 11 and 29 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura in view of Salmon and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,320,062 to Masuda et al. (Masuda).

The Examiner also rejected Claims 8 and 26 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura in view of Salmon and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,878,689 to Sugita et al. (Sugita) and United States Patent No. 5,291,851 to Muramatsu (Muramatsu).

In light of the remarks made above, the Applicants assert that Independent claims 1 and 22 are allowable, and therefore assert that Claims 8, 11, 14-20, 26, 29, and 32-38 are allowable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from allowable independent claim 1 or 22. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under §103(a).

IV. Conclusion

The Applicants assert that pending Claims 1, 3-8, 10-26, and 28-39, as amended are patentable. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner grant early allowance of these claims. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys for the Applicants via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 8-22-2003

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